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Title: Funding the Enemy
 Author(s): David C. Litt .
 Source: American Diplomacy.
 Document Type: Book review
 Article Preview :

Funding the Enemy: How US Taxpayers Bankroll the Taliban, By Douglas A. Wissing. New York: Prometheus Books, 2012, ISBN: 978-1616146030, 375 pp. \$25.00
 Afghanistan was the war of necessity. Our intervention should have been the model of coalition collaboration in support of our common security interests. It should have disrupted, dismantled or defeated entrenched extremism and reversed the tide of injustice inside a failing state. It should have matched global resources with crushing needs. Instead, Douglas Wissing's new book Funding the Enemy: How US Taxpayers Bankroll the Taliban shows how the U.S., in trying to dominate, rehabilitate and reconstruct a corrupt, woefully undeveloped country merely by throwing money at it, only exacerbated Afghanistan's problems: insurgency, narcotics and corruption. In fact, he concludes that the U.S. intervention in Afghanistan over the last decade was doomed from the start, in the same way that other nations (including the UK and the Soviet Union) eventually learned in the past. Worse, Mr. Wissing laments that the U.S. did not even try to accomplish its mission seriously because it was distracted by Iraq. Throughout the book he cites anecdote after anecdote, how USG resources were

misused and misdirected. To the extent any programs or projects were appropriate, he noted, the resources applied were insufficient. Mr. Wissing's bottom line, in any event, is that the overall strategy - stabilizing a country through economic, social and political development - was wrong-headed, since the assertion that development produces stability is unproven, he argues. To add insult to injury, the U.S. actors in this drama were themselves incompetent, corrupt, venal, lazy, fat and nubile, with no redeeming qualities and no measurable successes. (The tendentious references to overweight men and young, blond females were repeated, with knowing winks and nods, many times.) Mr. Wissing's conclusion - stated in the last paragraph of the book - is that the U.S. needs to leave Afghanistan now. And, by the way, in the same paragraph, the U.S. must somehow "prepare to help with the enormous humanitarian crisis that will predictably follow the inevitable fall of the corrupt Kabul government to the Taliban. ... " A curious epilogue to a book that devotes over 250 pages to show how incapable and incompetent the U.S. has been to do just that. To his credit, Mr. Wissing's chapters cover the most important issues for discussion and critique of the Afghanistan policy over the past decade. While his understanding of Afghanistan's political and economic condition before the Soviet invasion in 1979 is weak, he accurately paints a picture of a half-hearted American strategy, ill...

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